1: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1954 RR1 Siberia RR1

THE 'NORMAL' COLONIZATION

So far only those forms of colonization in the Far East have been mentioned which might be described as typically 'Soviet', ranging from the terror exercised by the N.K.V.D. to the exuberant enthusiasm of the Komsomol.* In addition, the Soviet Government has continued the normal, ordinary colonization which went on in Czarist times. The Soviet Government has provided a number of genuine incentives to make it worth while for Russian peasants and workers to go to the Pacific coastal areas.

The first important special measure for the encouragement of voluntary migration to the Far East was a decree which the government issued on December 11th, 1933. It freed the collective farmers of the Far Eastern Territory for the duration of ten years from all compulsory grain and rice deliveries to the state. It reduced by 50 per cent the compulsory deliveries of meat, vegetables, milk and wool, and in certain distant areas such as Sakhalin and Kamchatka these deliveries were abolished altogether. To the workers and technicians of the Far East the decree of December 11th, 1933, brought higher wages and salaries. The personnel of the Far Eastern mining industry received an automatic rise of 30 per cent, and all other categories of workers and technicians one of 20 per cent. On the same occasion the pay of soldiers of the Special Far Eastern Army was increased by 50 per cent, and that of officers by 20 per cent.

It seems that these 'Stalin Privileges' as they were called were not quite sufficient to attract settlers to the Far East. Another decree was, therefore, published on November 17th, 1937, which aimed chiefly at the encouragement of agricultural colonization. On the strength of that decree, groups of collective farmers going to the Far East were to be exempt from taxation for six years and to obtain state credits for fifteen years. The decree further pledged the state to pay 50 per cent of the costs of all buildings erected by the colonists.

So much for the legislation passed for the encouragement of colonization in the Far East. In practice, things proceeded very often on lines that are reminiscent of Gogol's *Dead Souls*. Each Soviet state authority or building organization in need of manpower for the Far East had its own small recruiting office in Moscow. Special recruiting agents were employed who were paid a fixed sum for every person whom they persuaded to take up work at a Far Eastern building site or factory. The usual tariff was thirty roubles per person, but occasionally the fee was

* Another special form of Soviet colonization in the Far East was the mobilization of Jews for the settlement of Birobidzhan. The author has described the failure of this experiment in *Russia and her Colonies* (London, George Philip and Son, Ltd., pp. 173–8).